

STAFF REPORT FOR OUT-OF-TURN PLAN AMENDMENT S01-CW-17CP

BACKGROUND

The transportation section of the *Policy Plan* of Fairfax County's Comprehensive Plan contains countywide objectives for transportation, appendices outlining functional classification systems for roadways and transit, roadway right-of-way requirements and the Transportation Plan Map. The purpose of this Plan Amendment is to update the Transportation section of the *Policy Plan* to reflect current travel demand forecasts and approaches to addressing the transportation challenges in Fairfax County and the surrounding areas over the next 20 to 25 years.

This Transportation Plan Update consisted of a comprehensive review of the countywide transportation system, including review of the transportation objectives and policies and the countywide transportation plan map. The Plan Update also incorporates the most up-to-date travel demand forecasts and analyzes the transportation network performance in future years. The current Transportation Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1991 through the Planning Horizons process and reviewed in the 1996 Policy Review Year. In 2001, the Board of Supervisors established the 2001- 2005 schedule for reviewing the public facilities, parks and recreation, and transportation sections of the Policy Plan. The transportation element of the Policy Plan was scheduled as the last section to be reviewed.

PLAN UPDATE PROCESS

In June 2004 the County awarded a contract to Cambridge Systematics, a transportation consulting firm, to prepare countywide travel demand forecasts and analyses of the performance of the County's Transportation Plan, using the most recent regional cooperative demographic forecasts prepared by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) in conjunction with various land use alternatives in the context of the Policy Plan Review process. During the course of the Plan Update process, Cambridge Systematics used the regional travel demand forecasting model developed by MWCOG to develop a County level travel demand forecasting model that is considerably more detailed and refined than the MWCOG regional model. This more refined County travel demand model was then used to test a number of land use and transportation network alternatives. A separate technical report (attached) describes this alternatives testing in more detail.

Public involvement in the Transportation Plan Update was initiated in December 2004, when the Fairfax County Department of Transportation announced that the

Transportation Plan would be updated in the coming year via a news release, a newsletter, and a project website. These communication channels also offered the public an opportunity to comment on the Plan. The first public comment period remained open until May 31, 2005.

In March 2005, the Department of Transportation held kick-off meetings to introduce the Plan Update process and engage the public in the review of the County Transportation Plan. Seven public information meetings were held from March 1 through 14, 2005 at locations geographically dispersed around the County.

Subsequent to the March meetings, two workshops were added to supplement the two rounds of planned public meetings. These workshops focused on more technical aspects of the travel demand forecasting conducted to date, and were held on July 13 and 16, 2005.

A second round of public meetings was held November 1 to 10, 2005. Seven meetings were held at locations geographically dispersed around the County. At these meetings, the proposed revisions to the transportation objectives and policies were discussed and the results of the various land use/transportation scenarios that were tested were described. A second public comment period was opened in October 2005 and remained open until November 30, 2005.

All of the suggestions and comments received from both public comment periods are compiled and addressed in the Public Input and Responses Report (attached).

HIGHLIGHTS OF PROPOSED POLICIES

Much of the work on these proposed objectives and policies was done by the Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC), a group of citizens representing each magisterial district appointed by the Board of Supervisors to advise the Board on transportation issues. In the fall of 2004 the TAC spent several months reviewing the objectives and policies and drafting revisions. Staff used the TAC draft as a basis for incorporating suggestions from the public and other groups into the set of proposed transportation policies that were presented at the November public meetings. Some minor refinements have been made subsequent to the November meetings and are included in the final proposed policies.

In revising the objectives and policies, the TAC desired to make the document more concise, eliminate jargon and redundancy, and ensure that it reflected the current state of the art. This desire is reflected in many of the proposed changes. A brief explanation of the most significant changes in each objective is provided below. A clean copy and a strike-through copy are attached to this report.

Goal – The goal has been slightly reworded to reflect the County’s desire to develop a “multi-modal” transportation system that provides “a variety of transportation options.”

Objective 1 (Multimodalism) – New policies under this objective cover High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes, bike lanes and accessible transportation for seniors and the disabled, as well as for the mobility challenged.

Objective 2 (Transit Services and Facilities) – This objective concerning the use of public transportation and non-motorized transportation is broadened to include all types of trips, not just commuter (i.e. home to work) trips. Also, the number of policies is reduced to make this objective more focused and understandable, with some of the policies moved to “New” Objective 5 covering the topic of Transportation Demand Management (TDM).

Objective 3 (Road Development) – New Policy c encourages the use of “context sensitive solutions” in roadway design.

Objective 4 (Non-motorized Transportation) – This objective and its policies have been strengthened and streamlined to reflect the community’s desire for a much-improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in the County. The need for bicycle routes, as part of the overall transportation network, has been added to this objective.

Objective 5 (TDM) – This new objective combines, modifies and expands upon previous Transportation Demand Management (TDM) policies.

Objective 6 (Programming/Funding) – Minor editorial changes have been made to this objective and its policies.

Objective 7 (Environmental Impact) – One policy concerning TDM is moved to the TDM objective. Two new policies concerning best practices for community design and pedestrian accommodations during construction are proposed.

Objective 8 (Financing) – Language has been changed to clarify this objective and its policies.

Objective 9 (Safety) – Policies related to emergency situations and incident management are proposed.

Objective 10 (Traffic Operations) – Main emphasis remains the same.

Objective 11 (Land Use and Transportation) – Policies are reordered and reworded, but main emphasis remains the same.

Current Objective 12 (Aviation) – This objective is proposed for deletion because the County does not have a direct role in providing aviation transportation facilities. Those policies under this objective that pertain to land use have been moved to Objective 11.

New Objective 12 (Right-of-Way Preservation) – Objective remains the same. Minor wording changes have been made to the policies.

Objective 13 (Plan Review) – The objective and its policies are simplified. The policy calling for an annual transportation summit is proposed for deletion.

Current Objective 13 (New Challenges) – This objective is proposed for deletion as it is duplicative with several other objectives, which address the challenges of suburb-to-suburb commuting and access to major employment areas in the County.

Appendix 1 (Roadway Functional Class) – Definitions of road functional class remain substantively unchanged. Transit functional class definitions are moved to Appendix 2. The Roadway Functional Classification Map has been enhanced via GIS. The Listing of Roadways By Functional Classification has been updated; changes are noted in the strikethrough version of the Plan.

Appendix 2 (Types of Transit Services and Facilities – New) – Appendix 1 currently devotes one-half page to Transit System Functional Classification. The new proposed Appendix 2 expands and enhances the definitions of transit services and facilities. These definitions are based on current industry standards.

Appendix 3 (Trail Classification – New) – These classifications for types of trails were adopted when the Trails Plan was amended in June 2002 and are described in the footnotes of the Trails Plan Map. Providing them in this Appendix will make them more accessible to the public and also reinforce the notion that the Trails Plan is part of the County's Transportation Plan.

Appendix 4 (Roadway Right-of-Way Requirements) – Proposed Appendix 4 adds cross sections illustrating typical roadway configuration sections to be used in conjunction with Table 1, which lists typical right-of-way requirements for roads where no design plans exist. These right-of-way requirements have been updated to reflect current standards, including the provision of pedestrian facilities on both sides of the road. Some outdated listings of roads in the design phase when the plan was previously adopted have been deleted.

HIGHLIGHTS OF PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION PLAN MAP CHANGES

A critical part of the Transportation Plan Update process has been travel demand forecasting for the year 2030 based on the most up-to-date land use forecasts available. After a competitive Request for Proposals, Cambridge Systematics was hired by the County to conduct this travel demand forecasting and to assist the County with other aspects of the Transportation Plan Update. Using the MWCOC regional model as a platform, Cambridge Systematics developed a more refined County-level model, which greatly expanded the number of traffic analysis zones used in the forecasting. This tool was then used to evaluate a number of land use and transportation futures. Results from the forecasting were reported at the public meetings and workshops in March, July and November of 2005. A separate report (attached) prepared by Cambridge Systematics provides a more detailed description of the model, scenario testing and results.

At the same time as this effort to update the County Transportation Plan has been occurring, TransAction 2030, a project under the direction of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA), to update the Northern Virginia 2020 Transportation Plan (NOVA 2020 Plan) was also being conducted. It is worth noting that the NOVA 2020 Plan proposed numerous improvements (both for transit and highways) in addition to those already included on the region's fiscally Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP). TransAction 2030 has focused on prioritizing projects within the eight major travel corridors that were identified in the Northern Virginia 2020 Plan. TransAction 2030 has not considered adding any new projects to those identified when the NOVA 2020 Plan was adopted in 1999.

In developing the recommendations below for the proposed Fairfax County Transportation Plan Map, all the projects identified in TransAction 2030 were considered. In no case have the TransAction 2030 projects been precluded; however, in some cases, the County Transportation Plan Map includes an Enhanced Public Transportation Corridor without a specific recommendation for a transit improvement because County staff believes more study is needed in order to make such a determination.

Sub-Areas

Two sub-area studies, one for the Laurel Hill area in the southeastern part of the County, and one for the Tysons Corner area, have been occurring simultaneously with the Transportation Plan Update. The Laurel Hill Transportation Analysis has been completed, and its recommendations have been included on the Transportation Plan Map. These recommendations include changing the ultimate cross-section of Lorton Road from six to four lanes between Silverbrook and Furnace Roads; changing Furnace Road from four to two lanes from Lorton Road to Landfill Road; and changing Silverbrook Road from two lanes to four lanes between Hooes Road and Route 123.

The Tysons Corner Study is ongoing and therefore no roadway changes in the Tysons Corner area have been included on the Transportation Plan Map. However, the proposed Transportation Plan Map does show the location of the four Metrorail Stations in Tysons Corner to reflect the Locally Preferred Alternative for the rail alignment, as endorsed by the Board of Supervisors in October 2002. When the Comprehensive Plan is amended for the Tysons Corner Urban Center, the roadway network will be revised as well.

Freeways/Expressways

Capital Beltway - High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes are shown on the plan for the first time. This reflects the Board's endorsement of the HOT lane proposal submitted by Fluor Daniel to VDOT under Virginia's Public Private Transportation Act (PPTA). The resulting ultimate cross-section for the Capital Beltway between the Springfield Interchange and the Old Georgetown Pike (Route 193) interchange is 12-lanes, with four general use travel lanes and two HOT lanes in each direction. In addition, the ultimate

anticipated cross-section for the Capital Beltway between the Springfield Interchange and the Woodrow Wilson Bridge is shown as 10+ lanes.

I-66 – Within the I-66 Enhanced Public Transportation Corridor, Metrorail is designated as the County's preferred transit investment strategy from Vienna Metrorail to the Fairfax/Prince William County line.

I-95/395 – HOT lane designation is added.

Route 28 – Due to the very large projected traffic volumes and associated congestion, we recommend the addition of a peak period HOV lane in both directions over the entire length of this corridor in Fairfax County. It is also recommended that the ultimate cross-section of this facility be shown as 10 lanes north of I-66 and 8 lanes south of I-66. It is recognized that these recommendations will need to be closely coordinated with the Comprehensive Plans for Loudoun and Prince William Counties.

Arterials

Richmond Highway – The proposed Transportation Plan Map reflects the revised cross-section, which accommodates a transit line in the median, as adopted by the Board of Supervisors in December 2004. A LRT/BRT designation as the County's preferred transit investment strategy for this corridor has been added from the Huntington Metrorail Station to Fort Belvoir. The proposed Transportation Plan Map also removes the grade-separated intersection at Route 1 and North Kings Highway, as approved by the Board in 2005.

Fairfax County Parkway – In addition to the HOV lane designation from I-66 to the Dulles Toll Road that is on the current Plan, add HOV to segments from I-66 to Sydenstricker Road linking with planned HOV on the Franconia-Springfield Parkway. Also, add HOV from the Dulles Toll Road to Route 7. Change Plan from four to six lanes for the following segments: Route 123 to Hooes Road; Baron Cameron to Route 7.

Manassas Battlefield Bypass – The Manassas Battlefield Bypass Draft Environmental Impact Study was completed in 2005 and is proposed to be added to the Plan Map. The preferred alternative for a road around the Manassas Battlefield is an alignment to the north.

Tri-County Parkway – The proposed Transportation Plan Map retains the Tri-County Parkway. Although a western alignment has been selected as the preferred alternative, the County noted in its comments (Oct. 11, 2005) on the Tri-County Draft Environmental study, that the western alignment did not serve same need as the Comprehensive Plan alignment. The County also requested a more comprehensive analysis of the traffic effects on local and residential roads is needed.

A complete list of proposed changes to the Transportation Plan Map is attached and additional explanation is provided in the attached Report on Travel Demand Forecasting.

Attachments:

1. Proposed Policies (clean version)
2. Proposed Policies (striketrough version)
3. Glossary
4. List of Figures in each Area Plan volume to be changed to be consistent with the adopted Fairfax County Transportation Plan Map
5. Transportation Plan Map
6. List Transportation Plan Map Changes (provided with map)
7. Public Input and Response Report
8. Report on Travel Demand Forecasting (by Cambridge Systematics)